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Lawmakers: Ida damage shows need for infrastructure upgrades

United States Geological Survey workers push a boat as they look for residents on a street flooded as a result of the remnants of Hurricane Ida in Somerville, N.J., Thursday, Sept. 2, 2021.

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Lawmakers: Ida damage shows need for infrastructure upgrades

From Front

By MATTHEW DALY
and HOPE YEN

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Shaken by haunting images of surging rivers, flooded roads and subways and other damage caused by the remnants of Hurricane Ida, lawmakers from both parties are vowing to upgrade the nation's aging infrastructure network.

As the deadly storm moved from the Gulf Coast through the Northeast, members of Congress said the deluge offered irrefutable evidence that power lines, roads, bridges and other infrastructure are deteriorating even as storms and other extreme weather are strengthening. At least 50 people from Virginia to Connecticut died as storm water from Ida's remnants cascaded into people's homes and engulfed automobiles, overwhelming urban drainage systems unable to handle so much rain in such a short time.

At least 16 deaths were blamed on the storm in Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama. "Global warming is upon us," said Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y. "When you get two record rainfalls in a week (in New York City), it's not just coincidence. When you get all the changes that we have seen in weather, that's not a coincidence. ... It's going to get worse and worse and worse, unless we do something about it."

Schumer and other lawmakers said the catastrophe is the latest example of why the nation needs the nearly trillion-dollar infrastructure bill passed by the Senate last month. He and other Democrats also are calling for passage of President Joe Biden's \$3.5



President Joe Biden talks with Louisiana Gov. John Bel Edwards and as Sen. Bill Cassidy, R-La., left, listens as Biden arrives at Louis Armstrong New Orleans International Airport in Kenner, La., Friday, Sept. 3, 2021, to tour damage caused by Hurricane Ida.

Associated Press

trillion, partisan rebuilding plan aimed at helping families and combating climate change.

"It's so imperative to pass the two bills," Schumer said. Democrats hope to pass both bills by the end of this month, but action on the bipartisan bill may be difficult until the larger package is ready. Progressives have said they won't support a bipartisan bill without strong companion legislation to advance their priorities. Biden made a pitch Friday for the bipartisan bill, saying it "is going to change things on our streets across the country." He cited the bill's "historic investment" in roads, rail and bridges, as well as clean energy, clean water and universal broadband. "It's about resilience," Biden said. "Make our roads and highways safer. Make us more resilient to the kinds of devastating impacts from extreme weather we're seeing in so many parts of the country."

The plan includes \$110 billion to build and repair roads and bridges and \$66 billion to upgrade railroads. It also includes about \$60 billion to upgrade the electric grid and build thousands of miles of transmission lines to expand use of renewable energy and nearly \$47 billion to adapt and rebuild roads, ports and bridges to help withstand damage from stronger storms as well as wildfires and drought.

"If we're going to make our country more resilient to natural disasters, whatever they are, we have to start preparing now," said Sen. Bill Cassidy, R-La.

Cassidy, a lead negotiator on the bipartisan bill, has touted the infrastructure legislation as a boon to hurricane-prone states such as his. "I'm sure hoping that Republicans look around my state, see this damage and say, 'If there's money for resiliency, money to harden the grid, money to help sewer and water,

then maybe this is something we should be for,'" he told CNN. Ultimately, repair and replacement of roads, bridges and other infrastructure damaged by Hurricane Ida and other natural disasters are likely to be funded by Congress as emergency relief money. But the bipartisan bill will be valuable in providing major investments in "future-proofing" infrastructure against climate change and extreme weather such as Ida, according to Jeff Davis, a senior fellow at the Eno Center for Transportation, a Washington think tank. The bill would be the first to devote money for "climate resilience," including \$17 billion for the Army Corps of Engineers to address backlogs in federal flood control projects.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration would receive \$492 million to map inland and coastal flooding, including "next-gen" modeling and forecasts. Another \$492

million would go toward improving the resilience of coastal communities to flooding by restoring natural ecosystems.

The legislation also provides \$3.5 billion for the Federal Emergency Management Agency to help communities reduce the risk of flood damage and \$8.7 billion for the Transportation Department to award grants to states to improve resiliency in ports and other coastal infrastructure.

"We have to start planning for what the future might hold and do modeling that's going to help us predict what these future risks are going to be," FEMA Administrator Deanne Criswell told "Fox News Sunday," calling the increasing frequency of severe storms that intensify more rapidly

"a new normal" because of climate change. "These threats aren't going to go away, and we need to start to reduce those impacts." The U.S. had 22 climate and weather disasters in 2020 with losses exceeding \$1 billion each, with eight such disasters this year as of July 9, according to NOAA. Ida and its remnants will likely cost in the tens of billions, analysts say.

Rep. Garret Graves, R-La., said a bipartisan infrastructure bill is needed, but the bill approved by the Senate could harm oil-producing states such as Louisiana by freezing out benefits for states that encourage fossil-fuel production.

The Democratic-only bill is even worse, Graves said, calling it "a final nail in the coffin" to the offshore oil industry, which is already struggling because of the pandemic and the hurricane. "All this does is benefit Iran," Graves said. "It benefits Russia. It benefits China." □

Ex-Marine held without bond in shooting of Florida family

By TERRY SPENCER and

FREIDA FRISARO

Associated Press

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla. (AP)

— A former Marine sharpshooter accused of invading the home of apparent strangers in Florida and fatally shooting a woman, her 3-month-old baby and two others was ordered held without bail during his first court appearance Monday.

Authorities did not give a motive for the grisly attack, but they said Bryan Riley may have a mental illness and that he told investigators said he was high on methamphetamines at the time. His girlfriend said had been saying for weeks that he could communicate directly with God.

At this court appearance Monday, Riley, 33, said that he intended to hire a lawyer, but one will be appointed for him in the meantime.

Riley surrendered on Sunday morning after a furious gunbattle with authorities who brought in at least one armored vehicle during their standoff. After it was over, an officer rushed into the home and rescued an 11-year-old girl, who was still conscious despite being shot seven times. She was in critical condition on Monday, the sheriff's office said. According to Polk County Sheriff Grady Judd, Riley told interrogators that



Quadruple murder suspect Bryan Riley is led from the Polk County Sheriff's Office in Lakeland, Fla., on Sunday, Sept. 5, 2021, by Deputy Steve Neil, left, Captain Bart Davis and Detective Brett Bulman.

Associated Press

the victims "begged for their lives, and I killed them anyway."

Judd said Riley told detectives, "You know why I did this." But Brian Haas, the local prosecutor, said investigators don't.

"The big question that all of us has is, 'Why?'" Haas said. "We will not know today or maybe ever."

On Saturday evening, hours before the attack began, Riley stopped by the victims' home in Lakeland, about 30 miles (50 kilometers) from Tampa, where he

lives, Judd said. Authorities have found no connection between Riley and the victims.

At the time, Justice Gleason, 40, was outside mowing his lawn, and Riley told him that God had sent him there to prevent a suicide by someone named Amber. Gleason and another person Judd described as one of the victims told Riley no one by that name lived at the house and told him to leave. They called the police, but when authorities arrived, Riley was gone.

Riley returned around 4:30 a.m. Sunday, arranging glowsticks to create a path leading to the house in what Judd said may have been an attempt to draw officers "into an ambush." Shooting began shortly thereafter — and when an officer in the area heard popping noises, he sounded the alarm, bringing state and local law enforcement officers to the scene. When the first ones arrived, they found an apparently unarmed Riley outside, dressed in camouflage

flage, and his truck ablaze. But Riley then ran back into the house, where authorities heard more gunfire, "a woman scream and a baby whimper," Judd said. Officers tried to enter the house, but the front door was barricaded. Judd said when they went around to the back, they saw Riley, who appeared to have on full body armor.

Riley and the officers exchanged heavy gunfire, with dozens "if not hundreds of rounds" fired, before Riley retreated back into the home, Judd said.

Everything fell silent, until a helicopter unit noticed that Riley was coming out, the sheriff said. He had been shot once and was ready to surrender. Authorities did not say where he was shot. Officers heard cries for help inside the home but were unsure whether there were additional shooters and feared the home was booby-trapped. Still, one officer rushed in and grabbed the wounded girl, who told authorities there were three dead people inside.

Officers sent robots into the home to check for explosives and other traps. They eventually found the bodies of Gleason; a 33-year-old woman; and her baby. The baby's 62-year-old grandmother was found was in another home on the property. It's not clear when she was shot. □

Justice Department will 'protect' abortion seekers in Texas

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Justice Department said Monday that it will not tolerate violence against anyone who is trying to obtain an abortion in Texas as federal officials explore options to challenge a new state law that bans most abortions.

Attorney General Merrick Garland said the Justice Department would "protect those seeking to obtain or provide reproductive health services" under a federal law known as the Freedom of Access to

Clinic Entrances Act. Garland said in a statement that federal prosecutors are still urgently exploring options to challenge the Texas law. He said the Justice Department would enforce the federal law "in order to protect the constitutional rights of women and other persons, including access to an abortion." The federal law, commonly known as the FACE Act, prohibits physically obstructing or using the threat of force to intimidate or interfere with a person seek-

ing reproductive health services. The law also prohibits damaging property at abortion clinics and other reproductive health centers.

The new Texas law prohibits abortions once medical professionals can detect cardiac activity, usually around six weeks — before some women know they're pregnant. Courts have blocked other states from imposing similar restrictions, but Texas' law differs significantly because it leaves enforce-



Abortion rights supporters gather to protest Texas SB 8 in front of Edinburg City Hall on Wednesday, Sept. 1, 2021, in Edinburg, Texas.

Associated Press

ment up to private citizens through lawsuits instead of criminal prosecutors. Justice Department officials have also been in

contact with U.S. attorneys in Texas and the FBI field offices in the state to discuss enforcing the federal provisions. □

Minnesota State Patrol purged messages after Floyd protests

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — The Minnesota State Patrol purged emails and texts messages immediately after protests over the death of George Floyd last year, according to testimony in a lawsuit that alleges the agency targeted journalists during the unrest.

During a July 28 hearing, State Patrol Maj. Joseph Dwyer testified that he and a "vast majority of the agency" deleted the messages after the protests and riots, according to a transcript published Friday on the court's docket.

Attorneys for the Minnesota chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union said the file destruction makes it nearly impossible to track the State Patrol's behavior, as courts and investigators are trying to determine whether law enforcement used improper force against demonstrators.

State Patrol spokesman Bruce Gordon told the Star Tribune that officers follow all requirements for retaining data and that he couldn't comment further due to the pending lawsuit.

"The purge was neither accidental, automated, nor routine," ACLU attorneys wrote in a motion



In this May 28, 2020, file photo, Minnesota State Police protect a Target Store Thursday, in St. Paul, Minn.

asking the judge to order the State Patrol to stop attacks on journalists covering protests. "The purge did not happen because of a file destruction or retention policy. No one reviewed the purged communications before they were deleted to determine whether the materials were relevant to this litigation."

The lawsuit alleges the Minneapolis Police Department and the State Patrol used unnecessary and ex-

cessive force to suppress First Amendment rights to cover the unrest last summer. It's one of several lawsuits filed against law enforcement for alleged constitutional violations in use of force last summer.

Jared Goyette, a freelancer who covered the unrest for the Washington Post and the Guardian, is the lead plaintiff in the lawsuit, which says he was "shot in the face with less-lethal ballistic ammunition"

by Minneapolis police on May 27. In addition to the lawsuit, the Department of Justice is investigating the police response to protests and riots, and Minneapolis is reviewing how its officers handled the unrest.

During the hearing, Dwyer said troopers were not acting on orders to delete records, but it's "standard practice" for troopers to do so.

"You just decided, shortly after the George Floyd

Associated Press

protests, this would be a good time to clean out my inbox?" asked ACLU attorney Kevin Riach.

Dwyer answered yes and said each person decides when they want to delete these records. He said it's a "recommended practice" to purge after a major event.

"Are you required to keep email correspondence for a certain period of time?" asked Riach.

"We are not," said Dwyer. Under Minnesota data law, the State Patrol is required to make and keep records of official activity — including text messages and emails, said Don Gemberling, spokesman for the nonprofit Minnesota Coalition on Government Information. They can only delete such messages under a schedule approved by a state records retention panel.

Gemberling said Dwyer's testimony "doesn't strike me as being consistent with what the statute is trying to accomplish, which is to make sure there's a record of why government does what it does."

"What they've done raises a whole lot of questions," Gemberling said. □



Damage to Wellacrest Farms is shown after a tornado passed through the area earlier in Mullica Hill, N.J., on Thursday, Sept. 2, 2021.

By CHRISTINA PACIOLLA
Associated Press

The morning after one of the most intense tornados recorded in New Jersey history all but demolished the largest dairy farm in the state, owners Marianne and Wally Eachus looked at each other and just cried.

"What are we going to do?" they asked one another.

Just 12 hours earlier, the couple was eating dinner when cellphone weather alerts warned that a tornado was imminent. The clouds were intense and swift, then there was a

New Jersey's largest dairy farm nearly destroyed in tornado

sound like a freight train, Marianne recalled.

They ran to the basement just in time for the EF3 tornado, one of seven that ripped through parts of New Jersey and Pennsylvania during last week's storm, to pass over. Barely three minutes went by, and it was gone.

When the owners of Wellacrest Farms in Mullica Hill, a suburb of Philadelphia, came out of their basement along with other family on their homestead, they saw that two of their massive grain silos had toppled over.

Some barns were completely reduced to concrete, roofs ripped off others, equipment was demolished, uprooted

trees crashed into the old farmhouse. "There was just metal, wood, debris, everywhere," Eachus said.

And hundreds of cows were trapped under collapsed barns.

Thirteen have died, a couple dozen more suffered injuries. A crew was milking when the twister ripped through and had only seconds to hide and hold on. They saw several cows swallowed by the funnel. Up to 100 cows were still missing Monday morning.

Somehow, there were no additional deaths on the dairy farm from the tornado. But the storm also produced historic rain and massive flooding from the remnants of Hurricane Ida that killed at least 50 people in six Eastern states, more than half in New Jersey alone. Those drenching rains came at the farm and for hours, Eachus and her family, joined by neighbors and friends, worked to corral the cows back into pens.

Wellacrest Farms was established in 1943 by the parents of Marianne's husband, Wally Eachus. Just over 20 years ago, Marianne and Wally took it over and still run it with the help of their kids.

Wellacrest produces more than 17 million pounds of milk annually and works with other farmers to share and sell crops. There are 1,400 cows on the property — about half of them are milking cows. □

PM points to Russia amid standoff at Belarus border

By VANESSA GERA

Associated Press

WARSAW, Poland (AP) —

Poland's prime minister told parliament Monday that the country faces a threat from Russia and Belarus as he sought support for a state of emergency declared in areas along the border with Belarus last week amid migration pressure. Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki spoke in parliament before lawmakers were due to vote on whether to approve the state of emergency that was declared last week by the president — a step unprecedented in the country's post-communist history. Morawiecki told the parliament that the defense of the Polish borders is the responsibility of the state, and that "today we see that in Moscow and Minsk scenarios are being written that threaten Poland's sovereignty."

Poland, Lithuania and Latvia the three European Union nations that border Belarus accuse Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko of pushing migrants from Iraq, Afghanistan, Syria and elsewhere into their countries illegally. They call it an act of "hybrid war" against their countries in revenge for EU sanctions. Morawiecki and other government officials have de-



Polish security forces surround migrants stuck along with border with Belarus in Usnarz Gorny, Poland, on Wednesday, Sept. 1, 2021.

fended the state of emergency also by noting that Moscow will begin large military exercises in Russia and Belarus later this month, something they say brings the risk of provocations along the border. The state of emergency allows the authorities to prevent journalists and other civilians from operating in an area three kilometers (nearly two miles) from the border with Belarus. Some lawmakers accused the government of using it to limit the rights of journalists to work, and citizens the right to obtain information, from the border.

Tomasz Siemoniak, deputy leader of the main opposition party, Civic Platform, said there was no doubt that Poland has external opponents seeking to weaken it, a threat he said that should never be taken lightly. But the former defense minister argued that there was no justification for the state of emergency now. He accused the ruling authorities of using it to distract from rising prices, scandals and problems in the health system. Morawiecki said at a news conference earlier in the day that migrants trying to enter into EU member Po-

land illegally from Belarus are being provided with food and money by the Belarusian security services, depicting them as actors in an illegal smuggling operation. While thousands of migrants have been pushed back or put in closed centers for immigrants, the main focus for weeks has been a group of around 30 people who have been stranded on the Poland-Belarus border. The International Organization for Migration in Geneva said it is deeply concerned by the "dire conditions" they are in, saying they are facing "extremely

Associated Press Polish

harsh conditions, with limited access to drinking water and food, medical assistance, sanitation facilities and shelter."

"Prolonging this unacceptable situation poses a grievous threat to the migrants' lives and health," the IOM said. It also emphasized that "migrants should not be instrumentalized."

Polish officials pushed back strongly against the view of the migrants as victims who are deprived of humanitarian aid. In Warsaw, the Polish authorities released images which they said showed Belarusian security forces providing the migrants with food, clothes and transport by car. Some appeared to show officials from the Belarus Red Cross, which visited the people last week.

Blazej Pobozny, a deputy interior minister, said it was a "false narrative" to view the people at the border as "poor, hungry refugees who do not get help from anywhere."

Interior Minister Mariusz Kaminski said that most of the people who crossed into Poland illegally are Iraqis who traveled by plane from Baghdad to Minsk. He said there is also a group of Afghans who have lived for many years in Russia, and who were now offered access to the EU. □

Sri Lankan Parliament approves state of emergency

By KRISHAN FRANCIS

Associated Press

COLOMBO, Sri Lanka (AP) —

Sri Lanka's Parliament on Monday approved a state of emergency declared by the president, who said it is needed to control food prices and prevent hoarding amid shortages of some staples.

Opposition lawmakers said the emergency declaration isn't needed because other laws can be used to maintain essential supplies, and the tough emergency rules can be misused to stifle critics.

The emergency law en-

ables authorities to detain people without warrants, seize property, enter and search any premises, suspend laws and issue orders that cannot be questioned in court. Officials who issue such orders are also immune from lawsuits.

President Gotabaya Rajapaksa declared the emergency on Aug. 30. The constitution requires that it be approved within 14 days by the 225-member Parliament, where the governing party has more than 150 seats. The resolution received 132 votes in favor and 51 against.

The government said it has made maximum efforts to use normal laws, but that court cases it filed have been delayed by the pandemic. Governing party lawmakers said the emergency was declared only because other options were not working, and that the government does not intend to use the emergency regulations against opponents.

Sri Lanka has been governed under a state of emergency for much the last 50 years as it went through two Marxist insurrections and a decades-



In this Jan. 13, 2014 file photo, a Sri Lankan food vendor cooks rice at a makeshift hut outside a Hindu temple ahead of Tamil harvest festival "Pongal" in Colombo, Sri Lanka.

Associated Press

long civil war. Authorities were often accused of using the rules to suppress opponents.

In recent weeks there have been shortages of essential items such as sugar, milk powder and cooking

gas. The government says the shortages were artificially created by hoarders. The country is also facing a foreign exchange crisis triggered by a drop in tourism and exports, along with heavy loan repayments. □

Germany protests to Russia over pre-election cyberattacks

By GEIR MOULSON

Associated Press

BERLIN (AP) — Germany has protested to Russia over attempts to steal data from lawmakers in what it suspects may have been preparation to spread disinformation before the upcoming German election, the Foreign Ministry in Berlin said Monday.

Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Andrea Sasse said that a hacker outfit called Ghostwriter has been "combining conventional cyberattacks with disinformation and influence operations," and that activities targeting Germany have been observed "for some time."

She said that, ahead of Germany's parliamentary election on Sept. 26, there have been attempts - using phishing emails, among other things to get hold of personal login details of federal and state lawmakers, with the aim of identity theft.

"These attacks could serve as preparations for influence operations such as disinformation campaigns connected with the parliamentary election," she told reporters in Berlin.

"The German government



In this Sept. 24, 2017 file photo a German flag flutters over the Reichstag building in Berlin, Germany.

Associated Press

has reliable information on the basis of which Ghostwriter activities can be attributed to cyber-actors of the Russian state and, specifically, Russia's GRU military intelligence service," Sasse said. It "views this unacceptable activity as a danger to the security of the Federal Republic of Germany and for the process of democratic decision-making, and as a

severe strain on bilateral relations."

She said Germany calls on the Russian government to end such activity immediately, and has made that demand directly to Russian officials most recently during a meeting on Thursday and Friday of a German-Russian working group on security policy, at which German deputy foreign minister Miguel Berger

raised the issue with Russia's deputy foreign minister.

Sasse wouldn't comment on the extent of the cyber-attacks or possible damage, saying only that they "are of course completely unacceptable, and that the German government reserves the right to take further measures."

In mid-July, the head of Germany's domestic intelligence agency said that

since February his agency had seen activity focusing on phishing attempts on the private email accounts of federal and state lawmakers and their staff. But he said that very few of those attempts were successful, and in cases where they were successful it appeared little damage had been caused.

Germany's concerns about Russian interference have extended to the activities of state-funded broadcaster RT, whose online-only German-language service has for years emphasized divisive issues such as migration and the restrictions imposed because of the coronavirus pandemic.

Chancellor Angela Merkel recently denied during a visit to Moscow that her government had exerted political pressure to block the station's request for a regular broadcast license, which was turned down last month by authorities in neighboring Luxembourg. Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova on Monday accused Germany of trying to suppress the channel, claiming that "it says what the German media dare not say." □

IAEA team in Japan to help prepare Fukushima water release

By MARI YAMAGUCHI

Associated Press

TOKYO (AP) — An International Atomic Energy Agency mission arrived in Japan on Monday to help prepare for a decades-long release into the ocean of treated but still radioactive water from the wrecked Fukushima nuclear plant, officials said.

The three-member team will meet with officials in Tokyo and travel to the Fukushima Daiichi plant to discuss technical details with experts until Friday, IAEA and Japanese officials said.

The team, headed by Lydie Evrard, head of the IAEA's Department of Nuclear Safety and Security, is gathering information to prepare a review of the discharge plans.

The Japanese government and the plant's operator, Tokyo Electric Power Company Holdings, announced plans in April to start releasing the water in the spring

of 2023 so hundreds of storage tanks at the plant can be removed to make room for other facilities needed for its decommissioning.

The idea has been fiercely



In this Saturday, Feb. 27, 2021, file photo, Nuclear reactors of No. 5, center left, and 6 look over tanks storing water that was treated but still radioactive, at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant in Okuma town, Fukushima prefecture, northeastern Japan.

Associated Press

opposed by fishermen, residents and Japan's neighbors, including China and South Korea.

The utility plans to send the water through an under-sea tunnel and discharge it from a location about 1 kilometer (0.6 mile) away from the coastal power plant after further treating and diluting it with large amounts of seawater.

"The Agency is supporting Japan to ensure that the entire operation to discharge the water over the coming decades is conducted in a way that is consistent with international safety standards," IAEA Director General Rafael Mariano Grossi said in a statement. He said the team will discuss the timeline for IAEA reviews to ensure the water discharge is

conducted "in a safe and transparent manner."

Japan has requested IAEA's assistance to ensure the discharge meets international safety standards and to gain the understanding of the international community.

A massive earthquake and tsunami in 2011 severely damaged three reactors at the Fukushima Daiichi plant, causing contaminated cooling water to leak. The water has been stored in about 1,000 tanks which the operator says will reach their capacity late next year.

Japanese officials say disposal of the water is required for the decommissioning of the plant, and that its release into the ocean is the most realistic option. □

Guinea's new junta leaders seek to tighten grip on power

By BOUBACAR DIALLO
and KRISTA LARSON
Associated Press

CONAKRY, Guinea (AP) — Guinea's new military leaders sought to tighten their grip on power Monday after overthrowing President Alpha Conde, ordering the soldiers from his presidential guard to join the junta forces and barring government officials from leaving the country.

After putting the West African nation back under military rule for the first time in over a decade, the junta already had dissolved the National Assembly and the country's constitution. On Monday, regional military commanders replaced Guinea's governors.

Junta leader Col. Mamadi Doumbouya said the military regime would not pursue vendettas against political enemies, though he also told officials from Conde's deposed government to turn over their passports. "There will be no spirit of hatred or revenge. There will be no witch hunt," said Doumbouya, who had led the Guinean army's



In this image made from video, unidentified soldiers patrol near the office of the president in the capital Conakry, Guinea Sunday, Sept. 5, 2021.

special forces unit before seizing power Sunday. "But justice will be the compass that will guide every Guinean citizen."

"For former members of the government, travel outside our borders will not be allowed during the transition," he said during the brief speech. "All your travel documents and vehicles must be handed over to the general secretaries of

your former departments." The military junta has refused to issue a timeline for releasing Conde, saying the 83-year-old deposed leader still had access to medical care and his doctors. The West African regional bloc known as ECOWAS, though, called for his immediate release and threatened to impose sanctions if the demand was not met.

Associated Press

Conde's removal by force Sunday came after the president sought and won a controversial third term in office last year, saying the term limits did not apply to him. While the political opposition and the junta both sought his ouster, it remained unclear Monday how united the two would be going forward. It also was unknown how much support the junta

leader had within the larger military. As the commander of the army's special forces unit he directed elite soldiers but it was still possible that others who remained loyal to the ousted president could mount a coup in the coming hours or days.

In announcing the coup on state television, Doumbouya cast himself as a patriot of Guinea, which he said had failed to progress economically since gaining independence from France decades earlier.

Observers, though, say the tensions between Guinea's president and the army colonel stem from a recent proposal to cut some military salaries.

"We will no longer entrust politics to one man. We will entrust it to the people," he said, draped in a Guinean flag with about a half dozen other soldiers flanked at his side.

Sunday's coup was a dramatic setback for Guinea, where many had hoped the country had turned the page on military power grabs. □

Goodbye Columbus: Mexico statue to be replaced by Indigenous

MEXICO CITY (AP) — Christopher Columbus is getting kicked off Mexico City's most iconic boulevard. Mayor Claudia Sheinbaum announced that the Columbus statue on the Paseo de la Reforma, often a focal point for Indigenous rights protests, would be re-

placed by a statue honoring Indigenous women.

"To them we owe ... the history of our country, of our fatherland," she said. She made the announcement on Sunday, which was International Day of the Indigenous Woman. The Columbus statue, do-

nated to the city many years ago, was a significant reference point on the 10-lane boulevard, and surrounding traffic circle is so far named for it.

That made it a favorite target of spray-paint-wielding protesters denouncing the European suppression of Mexico's Indigenous civilizations. It was removed last year supposedly for restoration, shortly before Oct. 12, which Americans know as Columbus Day but Mexicans call "Dia de la Raza," or "Day of the Race" the anniversary of Columbus' arrival in the Americas in 1492. When the statue was removed last year, President Andrés Manuel López Obrador noted that "it is a date that is very controversial and lends itself to conflicting ideas and political conflicts." □



In this Oct. 12, 2020 file photo, a pedestrian takes a photo of graffiti on a temporary metal barrier set up to protect the perimeter of the Christopher Columbus's statue which was removed by authorities on Paseo de la Reforma in Mexico City.

Associated Press

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Tuscany Residence Aruba: Aruba's Luxury Residential Resort with unique Water Villas

NOORD — Within walking distance of the finest white beaches and the clear blue ocean, Tuscany Residence Aruba is founded in one of the best and most popular neighborhoods of Aruba, close to the shopping and nightlife of Palm Beach. Tuscany Residence Aruba brings luxury living to a new level and they are very unique in their offerings with the Daimari Water Villas.

Around 180 exclusive properties will be built in all different sizes and prices, suitable for everyone's wishes and among them are 18 luxury Water Villas, all with a private terrace and direct access to the pool. The Daimari Water Villas include 2 and 3 bedrooms with wardrobes, 2 and 3.5 bathrooms, are fully furnished with a fully equipped German kitchen, fully air-conditioned and with wide aluminum sliding door to the covered pool terraces. Balcony and covered terraces are offered on the 2 floors unit and a private parking in front of the unit or your own garage is all yours. 50% of these amazing houses is already sold! There are still 9 residences available, including 2 with a one car garage.

Tuscany Residences now offer a special pre-construction discount, whereby your advantage increases to 9.7%. Pre-construction prices starting at US\$ 450,775 Turn-Key!

Dutch design

This luxury residential resort with various types of homes has many amenities such as swimming pools, restaurant, bar, offices, meeting rooms, gym, wellness and more. The combination of the beautiful Dutch modern international architecture and the Aruban palm trees creates a luxurious Aruban feeling and relaxed atmosphere in this resort. Tuscany Residence Aruba is the perfect choice for couples and families. Bas de Groot, Managing Director of Tuscany Residence Aruba adds, "We differ from traditional building, our design distinguishes itself." At 8 minutes' walk from Palm Beach, designed in a European style with high-quality materials, on property land and with buying possibilities from condos to townhouses to villas, Tuscany Residence is a dream comes true.



We take care of it all

De Groot adds, "Our project is in continuous construction which builds confidence. He continues saying that maintenance, property management, rental program and safety are taken care of. "You can log in from abroad and manage your property for rental or view your administration." The great thing about Tuscany is that it offers everything equal to a resort but you do not need to wait for an elevator to bring you up, worry about parking space or noisy neighbors. "We have got space and different size offerings making this more a community feel rather than a packed condo building." He also emphasizes that the location is one of the best on Aruba as it is quiet and close to Palm Beach.

Reasons to buy

Reasons to consider Aruba property ownership, at Tuscany Residence Aruba

- Excellent price-quality ratio
- Beautiful designs & Quality construction
- Residential Park with all amenities
- Property land on top-location
- Varies properties in different price range
- Onsite Maintenance Team, Property Management & Rental Program

Are you looking for a safe, quiet, residential area where you will meet a mix of local and foreign owners? Do you feel for a warm community with amenities like wellness, gym, restaurants, pools and this all within a structure where the residence takes care of your property management while you are not here? Can the highest European quality and solid working structure take away your preoccupations while you are home? Then meet us, we are here to convince you with quality!

For an impression of Daimari Water Villas have a look at the website: <https://www.tuscanyresidencearuba.com/en/news>. For more information please contact Bas de Groot by phone +297-7332424 or email bas@tuscanyresidencearuba.com. □

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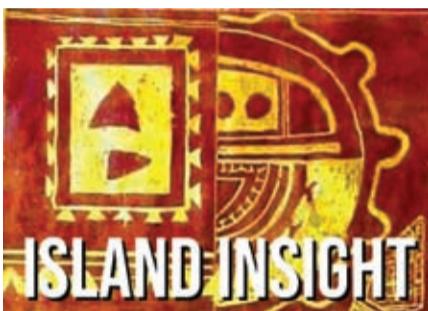
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Article by Etnia Nativa

WhatsApp us 592 2702 and book your Aruban experience!

Etnia Nativa is close to high rise Hotels



In the beginning

NOORD - The construction of the first high rise hotel, Aruba Caribbean Hotel and Casino, attracted the jetset and famous Hollywood movie stars. It was beneficial for our island seeing that there was a yearly-increasing wave of sight-seers in the Caribbean area due to this architectural landmark. In this manner, it was hoped that a considerable source of income would be opened up for the island.

Before July 1958, this area known as Palm Beach, could only be reached by secondary roads, now it was connected with Oranjestad and the airfield by a modern boulevard sided by palm trees that opened on May 1st, 1958. The coastal area that meant to be a tourist resort zone is now of easy access.

The intrinsic nature and indispensable quality of this travel destination, relies on its age old desert landscape, its surrounding oceans, beaches and its cultural heritage, but most of all is its friendly protagonists of our tourist industry, being the islands key attraction

factor and its success. Since 1950 plans were made to attract cruise ships to the Paardenbaai (Horses' Bay) in Oranjestad. The arrival of the first cruise ship of that time, The Trade Wind, calling port on February 1955, had become a historical event. Receptions and festivities had been organized. A welcome committee, consisting of Aruban girls dressed for the occasion in specially designed gowns, stood ready on the quay to guide the tourists to the Oranjestad shopping-center. Almost all cars



on the island streamed to the harbor, traffic jams were caused, and one wondered whether the

Aruban population were setting forth to see the tourists or whether the tourists were here to see the island. In 1961 the quaint restaurant De Olde Molen (The Old Mill) was established here. A mill was purchased in the Netherlands and carried across the ocean for this purpose.

But in this time, we stand at that point of redefine the product destination. Reconsider all assets. Recognize and respect local essences of existing cultural aspects and all native species, since these two are at risk of becoming endangered and even extinct. It is in hand of the general public to requesting legislative protection safeguarding and guaranteed protection for our ecosystem's existence for our next generation and of our visitors. We must create awareness of our, yet unfathomed assets which could be lost without ever knowing of their existence. □



To get to know more over Aruba's and its origins, its animals and culture, we highly recommend you to book your visit for our renowned cultural encounter session has been entertaining curious participants for decades. Mail us at etnianativa03@gmail.com or WhatsApp 297 592 2702 to confirm your participation. Our facilities and activities take place close to high rise hotels.

Episode CXX - 120

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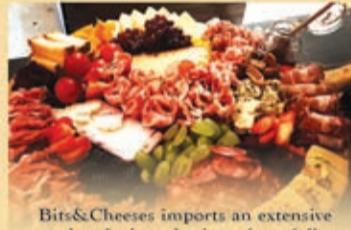
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Tips for an unforgettable vacation in Aruba!

ORANJESTAD — We know how stressful preparing for a trip can be, that's why we've put together a list of tips for you to take away some of that stress. We want to help make your vacation unforgettable!

- Entering vehicles must yield to vehicles that are already in the round-about. Also, at all intersections, traffic coming from the right has the right of way. The amber light used at traffic lights is to signal caution, as the traffic light is to turn from green to red.

- Seat Belts: Seatbelts must be worn at all times in Aruba.
- Cell Phones: Talking on the phone is illegal while driving in Aruba, and can lead to hefty fines and court action, and even imprisonment. If you want to talk on the phone, you must set your device to hands-free mode.
- Alcohol Use: The maximum permitted blood alcohol level is 50 mg per 100 ml of blood, which means that one drink will take you over the legal limit. So, please call a taxi if you've been drinking.

- Gas/fuel stations: The price of gas is regulated by the government of Aruba and is the same everywhere on the island. You will also be pumping gas in liters, and 1 gallon equals 3.78 liters. Current gas prices are: Gasoline unleaded premium: 221.6 cents p / ltr.
- Diesel LS: 175.8 cents p / ltr.

Protect your skin

When in Aruba, don't forget to protect your skin with sunscreen every couple of hours, especially after swimming. If you're looking to get a nice tan, still use sunscreen. You can use regular sunscreen, or you can use the water resistant aloe vera sunscreen. The aloe vera in sunscreen is locally grown in Aruba. You can find aloe vera everywhere!

Tipping

In Aruba it's not mandatory to tip, but it's your choice if you do so. However, some restaurants and bars add service charge to your bill. Usually, this adds up to about 10 to 15 percent on food and beverages. If you really like the service, you can still tip, of course!

Chargers

You also want to make sure you can charge your phone, camera or laptop. If you're from the USA or Canada, you don't have to worry. Aruba adopted the voltage standard of 110V, the same as in the USA and Canada. However, if you're not from the USA or Canada, you might want to check if your devices need 220V or 110V, then you may need a converter. You can buy these in your home country or in Aruba at hardware stores or supermarkets.

No need to buy water

The tap water in Aruba is of high quality and perfectly safe to drink.

Emergencies

Let's hope it's not necessary, but it's good to know. In case of an emergency, you can call 911 for an ambulance or the fire department and for the police, you can call 100.

Keep in mind to wash your hands frequently, wear your face mask at all times, avoid crowded areas, practice social distance and adhere to all rules and protocols. Have a fun and unforgettable vacation! □

Money

The currency in Aruba is the florin (Awg. or Afl.), but US dollars are accepted everywhere. You can withdraw both florins and US dollars from several ATMs (not all) if you want to keep using US dollars. Otherwise you need to go to the bank or casino to exchange your money. Most places, like shops and hotels, grant a rate of exchange ranging from Awg. 1.75 to Awg. 1.80 per US dollar.

Getting around

There are several ways to get around on the island. The most convenient way is by car, but you can find other ways to get from point A to point B.

- Taxi: A great way to get around is to call a taxi. In Aruba, it's not usual to hail a cab off the street, you will find a taxi parked at most resorts or tourist area. There are lots of different cabs you can call, and they are all familiar with the places you want to go to. The prices are fixed prices regulated by the government of Aruba. You pay for the cab, not the amount of people.
- Car rental: Renting a car is also a safe and easy way to get around on the island. There are dozens of car rentals with good quality cars.
- Bike rental: Renting a bike is a bit more dangerous. Since there are no biking lanes, it is harder to get around. You have to ride on the same road as cars do, which can be tricky sometimes.

Rules of the Road

- Drive on the right side of the road.
- There is a predominance of roundabouts instead of traffic lights at major intersections, which is a change that has been implemented in Aruba in recent years.
- Right-hand turns: Right-hand turns are always forbidden on red lights (unlike in the U.S.).
- Speed Limits: Note that speed limits in Aruba are posted at kilometers per hour.
- Overtaking: Many streets in Aruba are one-way streets, so overtaking should be done with extreme caution.

Cattle producers have a beef with 35-year marketing campaign

By ROXANA HEGEMAN

Associated Press

BELLE PLAINE, Kan. (AP) — Cattle producers for 35 years have been bankrolling one of the nation's most iconic marketing campaigns, but now many want to end the program that created the "Beef. It's What's for Dinner" slogan. What's the ranchers' beef? It's that their mandatory fee of \$1 per head of cattle sold is not specifically promoting American beef at a time when imports are flooding the market and plant-based, "fake meat" products are proliferating in grocery stores.

"The American consumer is deceived at the meat counter and our checkoff funds do not do anything to help create clarity or answer the question of where was that sirloin born, raised and harvested," said Karina Jones, a Nebraska cattle rancher and field director for the R-CALF USA trade group that is seeking to end the checkoff.

Opponents of the beef checkoff program, which was established by federal law in 1986, are urging cattle producers to sign a petition calling for a referendum vote on terminating the program.

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack last month granted an extension until Oct. 3 for them to collect the required signatures due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Petition supporters argue the beef checkoff is a government-mandated assessment to fund government speech. Beef checkoff funds by law cannot be used to advertise against other meats such as pork or chicken, nor can they be used for lobbying. But they complain much of the money nonetheless props up lobbying groups such as the National Cattlemen's Beef Association that oppose mandatory country-of-origin labels. They also point out that today's U.S. cattle industry is radically different than it was when the checkoff program was put into place, with more imported beef and greater meatpacker concentration.

"Now we are paying the advertising bill for four ma-



In this June 10, 2020 file photo, cattle are seen at a feedlot in Columbus, Neb. In this June 10, 2020 file photo, cattle are seen at a feedlot in Columbus, Neb.

jor meatpacking plants that are able to import beef and source it from cheaper countries and fool our consumers," Jones said.

The petition has created a schism in the livestock industry between those who support the checkoff and those who don't. But consumers have a stake in the fight as well.

One way to look at this is that consumers probably should not like the checkoff program because it raises their beef prices, and some consumer groups are opposed to it for that reason, said Harry Kaiser, director of Cornell University's Commodity Promotion Research Program. Another way to look at it is that the checkoff also funds research into beef safety and the development of new beef products, he said.

"Consumers pay a few pennies more, but it is a safer product, a better quality product," Kaiser said.

Kaiser, who conducts research for the U.S. Agriculture Department on commodity advertising and promotion programs, wrote in an economic analysis that domestic beef demand between 2014 and 2018 would have been 14.3% lower without the consumer advertising and other promotional activities of the Cattlemen's Beef Promotion and Research Board. In 2019, the

board had a budget of \$40.5 million to spend on activities that aim to increase beef demand.

Kaiser also noted in a phone interview that the checkoff-funded marketing research found that one reason consumers have been reluctant to purchase beef is because they felt it takes too long to prepare after coming home from work. That led to development of more easy-to-prepare beef products that consumers can buy at the supermarket and just pop into the microwave to cook.

But cattle producers say it's been two decades since checkoff-funded beef innovations like the flat iron steak, a high-value cut that came out of a low-value area of the carcass that previously had just been made into chuck roast. Since 1966, Congress has authorized industry-funded research and promotion boards to help agricultural producers pool resources and develop new markets. USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service now provides oversight for 22 such commodity programs, according to its website.

The mandatory nature of the various commodity checkoff programs has been controversial, sparking thousands of lawsuits over the years. Three cases reached the U.S. Supreme Court with mixed outcomes, Kaiser said.

The nation's highest court ruled in 1997 in a case by fruit tree farmers that commodity advertising was constitutional because it was a part of a broader regulatory program. But four years later, the Supreme Court ruled a federally mandated mushroom advertising program was not part of a larger regulatory program and was therefore unconstitutional as compelled private speech. And in 2005, the Supreme Court found the beef checkoff program was constitutional on government speech grounds.

While these programs are now constitutional as part of a broader regulator scheme, Kaiser said a conservative Supreme Court could overturn these precedents, which are similar to requiring workers to be in labor unions.

This is not the first time critics of the beef checkoff program have tried to wrangle enough signatures on a petition. The Agricultural Marketing Service received a petition from cattle producers in 1999 and determined the signatures fell short of the required number.

It takes the petition signatures of 10% of the nation's cattle producers — in this case 88,269 valid signatures — to put the issue before the agriculture secretary. Any cattle producer who has owned, sold or purchased cattle from

Associated Press

July 2, 2020 through July 1, 2021 is eligible to sign the petition. Vilsack would then decide whether to hold a referendum on ending the program.

So far, checkoff opponents have gathered around 30,000 signatures, Jones said.

Kansas rancher Steve Stratford, one of the people who initiated the petition, said meatpackers — who do not pay into the checkoff program — are the ones whose profit margin has increased while the checkoff has been in existence.

"Long story short: The person that is paying the dollar is not the one reaping the benefits of better demand and higher beef prices," Stratford said.

But Greg Hanes, the chief executive officer of the beef board that runs the checkoff program, said that when it was established there was a "conscientious decision" not to have the packers participate so that it is driven by producers. He noted that market dynamics are always changing and, at times, the packers are doing better than producers and sometimes producers are doing better than packers. Hanes defended the checkoff, saying that it is especially important for research in nutrition and that without the program consumers don't get information on the benefits of beef. □

CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

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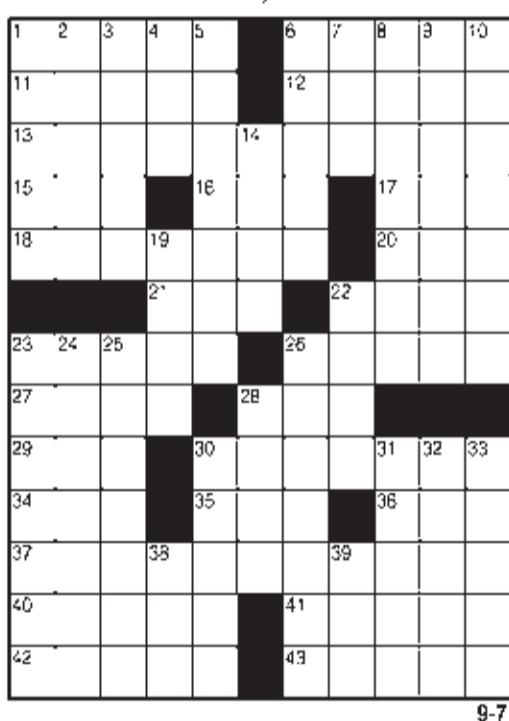
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Yesterday's answer

- 13 Chess game start 1 Pork servings 9 Reciprocal 26 Oversees
 15 Stew sphere 2 Indian coin profound offering
 16 Opponent 3 Clarifying 14 Lunch time 30 Big pipes
 17 Vigor 4 Prohibit 22 Expense 32 Gaggle
 18 Capitol worker 5 Brandy 23 Wonderful group
 20 Mine yield 6 Wild party 24 Area of shapes
 21 Wallet bill 7 Money common 38 Behold
 22 Swear machine interest 39 Work
 23 Car part 8 Become 25 CPA's wk.'s
 26 Sacred song exhausted study end



9-7

AXYDLBAAXR
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's. X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

9-7

CRYPTOQUOTE

NG KHY'XL VHNQV BH PL ZPUL.
 BH UHHIC PZFC HQ EHSLBIDNQV
 ZQT UZYVD ZPHYB NB, KHY
 SNVDB ZE RLUU UZYVD ZPHYB

NB QHR. — SXNL HESHQT
 Yesterday's Cryptoquote: WHEN YOU DON'T KNOW THAT YOU DON'T KNOW, IT'S A LOT DIFFERENT THAN WHEN YOU DO KNOW THAT YOU DON'T KNOW. — BILL PARCELLS



In this Wednesday, Dec. 16, 2020 file photo, the logo of Apple is illuminated at a store in the city center in Munich, Germany.

Associated Press

Apple delays iPhone photo-scanning plan amid fierce backlash

By MICHAEL LIEDTKE and MATT O'BRIEN

AP Technology Writers

BERKELEY, Calif. (AP) — Apple is indefinitely delaying plans to scan iPhones in the U.S. for images of child sexual abuse following an outcry from security and privacy experts who warned the technology could be exploited for other surveillance purposes by hackers and intrusive governments. The postponement announced Friday comes a month after Apple revealed it was getting ready to roll out a tool to detect known images of child sexual abuse. The tool would work by scanning files before they're uploaded to its iCloud back-up storage system. It had also planned to introduce a separate tool to scan users' encrypted messages for sexually explicit content.

Apple insisted its technology had been developed in a way that would protect the privacy of iPhone owners in the U.S. But the Cupertino, California, company was swamped criticism from security experts, human rights groups and customers worried that the scanning technology would open a peephole exposing personal and sensitive information.

"Based on feedback from

customers, advocacy groups, researchers, and others, we have decided to take additional time over the coming months to collect input and make improvements before releasing these critically important child safety features," Apple said in an update posted above its original photo-scanning plans.

Apple never set a specific date for when the scanning technology would roll out, beyond saying it would occur some time this year. The company is expected to unveil its next iPhone later this month, but it's unclear if it will use that event

about-face for Apple," said Cindy Cohn, executive director for the Electronic Frontier Foundation, one of the most vocal critics of the company's plans.

"If you are going to take a stand for people's privacy,

you can't be scanning their phones."

Cohn applauded Apple for taking more time to reassess its plans and urged the company to talk to a broader range of experts than it apparently did while drawing up its scanning blueprint in its typically secretive fashion.

Matthew Green, a top cryptography researcher



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Climate change pushes New Zealand to warmest recorded winter

By NICK PERRY

Associated Press

WELLINGTON, New Zealand

(AP) — The southern winter that just ended in New Zealand was the warmest ever recorded, and scientists say that climate change is driving temperatures ever higher. For the three months through August, the average temperature was 9.8 Celsius (50 Fahrenheit), according to New Zealand's National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research.

That's 1.3C above the long-term average and 0.2C higher than the previous record posted last year. Scientists have been keeping records since 1909, but most of the warmest winters have been recent.

Nava Fedaeff, a meteorologist at the institute, said that on top of a background of global warming, this year there were more warm winds than usual from the north and warmer sea temperatures.

She said the underlying

warming trend can be tracked through carbon dioxide concentration, which has increased in New Zealand from 320 parts per million 50 years ago to about 412 parts per million today. Fedaeff said snowfall at lower elevations was well below average this winter as it was often replaced with rain, which could make for lower river levels later in the year because there will be less snowmelt. That could impact irrigation for farms, she said. There were also more extreme weather events, Fedaeff said, including severe flooding in some places and dry spells in others. Professor James Renwick, a climate scientist at the Victoria University of Wellington, said that in the short term at least, some New Zealand farmers with cow or sheep herds might benefit from a longer grass-growing season. □



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'Shang-Chi' blasts Labor Day records with \$71.4M debut

By JAKE COYLE

AP Film Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — On what's traditionally one of the sleepiest weekends at the movies, the Marvel film "Shang-Chi and the Legend of the Ten Rings" smashed the record for Labor Day openings with an estimated \$71.4 million in ticket sales, giving a box office reeling from the recent coronavirus surge a huge lift heading into the fall season.

The Friday-to-Sunday gross for "Shang-Chi and the Legend of the Ten Rings," Marvel's first film led by an Asian superhero, ranks as one of the best debuts of the pandemic, trailing only the previous Marvel film, "Black Widow" (\$80.3 million in July). Overseas, it pulled in \$56.2 million for a global three-day haul of \$127.6 million. Disney anticipates "Shang Chi," made for about \$150 million, will add \$12.1 million domestically on Monday.

The Walt Disney Co. opted to release "Shang-Chi" only in theaters where it will have an exclusive 45-day run. Some of the studio's releases this year, including "Black Widow," have premiered day-and-date in theaters and on Disney+ for \$30.

The strong opening of "Shang-Chi" — forecasts had been closer to \$50 million — was a major relief for Hollywood, which had seen jittery releases the last



This image released by Marvel Studios shows Tony Leung, left, and Fala Chen in a scene from "Shang-Chi and the Legend of the Ten Rings."

Associated Press

few weeks during rising COVID-19 cases driven by the delta variant. Several upcoming films have recently postponed out of the fall, including Paramount Pictures' "Top Gun: Maverick," "Jackass Forever" and "Clifford the Big Red Dog." Disney's weekend, though, should lend confidence to upcoming big-budget releases such as the James Bond film "No Time to Die" from MGM and United Artists Releasing, and Sony Pictures' "Venom: Let There Be Carnage."

"Shang-Chi" is the ultimate confidence-builder for the theatrical movie industry," said Paul Dergarabedian, senior media analyst for data firm Comscore. "This was a very important film. This was the first Marvel movie that's opened exclusively theatrically since 'Spider-Man: Far From Home' in July 2019. 'Shang-Chi' is a real testament of

the power of a theatrical-first strategy to drive huge numbers of moviegoers to the multiplex."

Perhaps nobody was celebrating Sunday more than theater owners. Exhibitors have argued day-and-date releases significantly cannibalize ticket sales. Warner Bros., which is putting all of its 2021 releases simultaneously on HBO Max, has vowed to end the practice next year. Adding to that argument is the continuing strong performance of "Free Guy," from Disney's 20th Century Studios. "Free Guy," contractually obligated to be released only in theaters, has grossed \$239.2 million globally. Without an in-home option, the Ryan Reynolds film has held especially strongly; it added \$8.7 million in North America over the weekend, good for third place. In China, "Free Guy" has made

\$57 million in less than two weeks. ("Shang-Chi" doesn't yet have a China release date.)

Last week's top film, the Universal horror remake "Candyman," slid to second place with \$10.5 million. After the holiday weekend, Universal pegs its two-week total at \$41.9 million.

Still, you could also read a case for streaming in Disney's figures Sunday. "Shang-Chi," the studio noted, premiered roughly similarly to "Black Widow," which debuted with about \$160 million globally, but took in an additional \$60 million on Disney+ Premier Access. "Black Widow," a much more well-known property, launched before the delta variant was widespread in North America. Its release prompted a lawsuit from star Scarlett Johansson, who argued the day-and-date approach

breached her contract and deprived her of potential earnings. Disney has said the release complied with Johansson's contract and called the suit without merit.

Disney has so far declined to telegraph its future theatrical intentions, including for its next Marvel movie, "Eternals" (due out Nov. 5). Bob Chapek, Disney's chief executive, earlier called the theatrical release of "Shang-Chi" "an interesting experiment" — a label that Canadian actor Simu Liu, who plays Shang-Chi, took exception with. "We are not an experiment," Liu wrote on Twitter. "We are the underdog; the underestimated. We are the ceiling-breakers. We are the celebration of culture and joy that will persevere after an embattled year."

At the recent exhibitor convention CinemaCon, where some studios pledged faith in the big screen, Disney didn't make a presentation and instead simply screened "Shang-Chi." Directed by Destin Daniel Cretton, the film is based on a relatively little-known comic and features a largely Asian or Asian American cast, including Tony Leung, Awkwafina and Michelle Yeoh. Audiences and critics have heartily endorsed it. It has a 92% fresh score on Rotten Tomatoes and an "A" CinemaScore from moviegoers. □



From left, actors Penélope Cruz and Antonio Banderas pose for photographers at the photo call for the film 'Competencia Oficial' (Official Competition) during the 78th edition of the Venice Film Festival in Venice, Italy, Saturday, Sep. 4, 2021.

Associated Press

By NICOLE WINFIELD
Associated Press
VENICE (AP) — Antonio

Banderas and Penelope Cruz brought some laughs to the Venice Film Festival

Banderas skewers his own craft in 'Official Competition'

on Saturday with a comedy that skewers their own craft, and apparently was as funny to make as it was to watch.

Audiences chuckled throughout "Official Competition," by Argentine directors Gastón Duprat and Mariano Cohn, bringing some levity to the world's oldest film festival that is still vying with the coronavirus pandemic. The film is in the main competition at Venice, which ends Sept. 11. "Official Competition" is

about the pre-production of a film and the exaggerated rituals, tics and exercises that the director (Cruz) and actors (Banderas and Argentine actor Oscar Martinez) go through to prepare for their roles. Egos, envy and competition between leads naturally come into play in this naval-gazing look at the art of making, directing and producing movies.

"We laughed a LOT," said Cruz, who was also at Ven-

ice to present the festival-opening "Parallel Mothers" by Pedro Almodovar. The directors and actors alike insisted theirs was a respectful parody of the things actors do to get into character, though Banderas didn't hold back when asked to give an example of an unusual ritual he had experienced.

"I'm going to scream a little bit," he warned reporters before belting out a deep "Maaaah" several times. □

Headaches galore: Contenders struggle in NASCAR playoffs

By PETE IACOBELLI

AP Sports Writer

DARLINGTON, S.C. (AP) — Kyle Busch slammed into the wall and wiped out several orange cones on his way to the garage. Chase Elliott told his crew chief simply, "It's killed," after he was crunched against the wall at Darlington Raceway.

It was a layout certainly "Too Tough To Tame" for some of the top contenders in the NASCAR Cup Series playoff opener on Sunday night.

The last two series champions, Busch in 2019 and Elliott last year, were out of their cars and planning for next week in Richmond long before Denny Hamlin took the checkered flag.

Busch raced closely with Austin Dillon, got loose and tagged the outside wall in turn two before hitting the inside wall. He jumped in his car and drove straight off the track, scattering several orange cones in his getaway.

Then Busch turned his frustration on his No. 18 team. "It shouldn't be that" bad, he said in his profanity-laced comments. "I don't know what our problem was."

Busch finished 35th.

Elliott had similar issues later when he was on the wrong side of a three-wide run and was pushed against



Martin Truex Jr. pits during a NASCAR Cup Series auto race Sunday, Sept. 5, 2021, in Darlington, S.C.

Associated Press

the wall. He came away with a flat tire and brake problems.

"It's killed," he radioed to crew chief Alan Gustafson. "There's no way we can go on." Elliott finished 31st.

"It seemed like a lot of cars who are in the chase had issues," car owner Joe Gibbs said.

That's right, Coach.

Elliott's Hendrick Motorsports teammate William Byron ran into another teammate, Alex Bowman, early in the race. Later, Byron couldn't escape the wall, and his car briefly caught fire before he took it into the garage. The eighth-seeded

Byron ended in 34th place. And Daytona 500 champion Michael McDowell, excited for a playoff run, saw his race end much earlier than he imagined after hitting the wall just 30 laps in. "It's not the way we wanted to start the playoffs," McDowell said. "But we know what we've got to do now."

They weren't the only ones of the top 16 drivers who cost themselves an opportunity at Darlington. In a bit of unlucky timing, past champion Brad Keselowski came in for a green-flag pit stop a couple of laps before a caution allowed

everyone in to refuel and install fresher, faster tires that are critical to success at Darlington.

Hamlin's second-seeded JGR teammate, Martin Truex Jr., was poised to come out of the pits in front with just 36 laps left when he was ticketed for going too fast into his stall. He was moved to the back of the pack just as he was in reach of adding the Southern 500 to his Darlington win this past May.

"We were going to be the leader, weren't we?" Truex radioed to his team. When told they were, Truex said,

"I'm sorry."

Bowman, the sixth seed, ended 26th at Darlington while Ryan Blaney, tied with Truex as the second seed and winner of the past two races coming in, was hit with a pit penalty for an uncontrolled tire that dropped him into 22nd.

At the moment, it's Hamlin in control as the first driver advancing to the round of 12 after his fourth career win at Darlington. Kyle Larson, the championship favorite and top playoff seed, finished second behind Hamlin, while Truex held on for fourth.

One mark of a champion could be overcoming issues to stay alive in the playoff's elimination format. Those drivers on the outside at the moment are Bowman in 13th, followed by Busch, Byron and McDowell.

They'll have to gird themselves to try for the win either next week at Richmond or Bristol that would vault them into the next round. If not, early headaches might cost them a shot at a NASCAR championship.

Bowman said that so many other playoff drivers had problems doesn't make him feel much better about his own performance.

"Pretty frustrated with myself to grab the wall that early," he said. "But that's Darlington and that's playoff racing." □

Olympic champs Zverev, Bencic reach U.S. Open quarterfinals

By BRIAN MAHONEY

AP Sports Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Alexander Zverev and Belinda Bencic want a trophy in their hands to go with the gold medals they had around their necks.

The Tokyo Olympics tennis champions both moved into the quarterfinals of the U.S. Open on Monday, getting a step closer to their first Grand Slam titles.

Zverev beat Jannik Sinner 6-4, 6-4, 7-6 (7) for his 15th straight victory. The No. 4 seed from Germany started that run in Japan, carried it through a title in Cincinnati

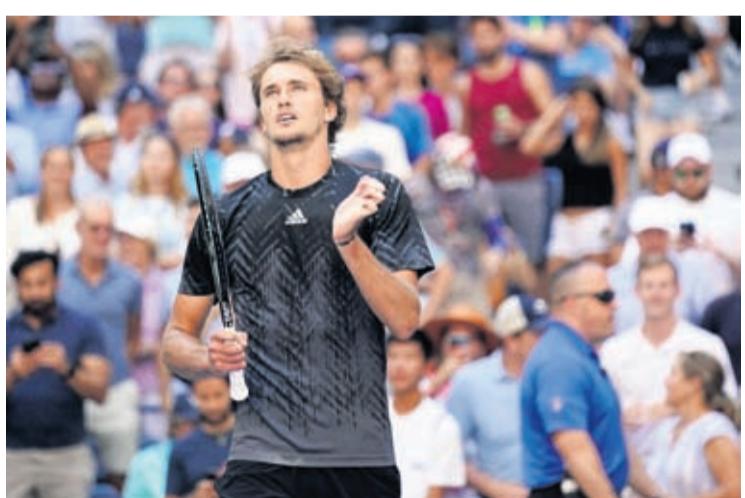
and then kept right on going at the U.S. Open, where he was the runner-up to Dominic Thiem last year. Zverev said his gold medal is with him in New York. The 24-year-old, who has been accused by a former girlfriend of domestic abuse, joked in his on-court interview that he cuddles with the medal when he's in bed because he doesn't have a girlfriend.

He said keeping the medal with him is a way to remind himself of his success over the last month. He pointed to the confidence he's gained from it as a reason

he pulled out a couple of close games late in the second set, then came from behind to take the tie-breaker.

"I think that's maybe the last few months for me, right there," he said.

Bencic also had her best result in a major at the U.S. Open, reaching the semifinals in 2019 in her last appearance. The 24-year-old from Switzerland is a victory away from getting back there after beating 2020 French Open champion Iga Swiatek 7-6 (12), 6-3. The 11th-seeded Bencic pulled out the lengthy first-



Alexander Zverev, of Germany, celebrates after winning his match against Jannik Sinner, of Italy, in the fourth round of the U.S. Open tennis championships, Monday, Sept. 6, 2021, in New York.

Associated Press

set tiebreaker, then took the second set in 43 minutes — only about 20 more than the tiebreaker lasted.

"The set was so even, so I think in the tiebreak it's always a little bit about luck," Bencic said. □

Cantlay tough on the course, even tougher off it



Patrick Cantlay poses with the trophies after winning the Tour Championship golf tournament and the FedEx Cup at East Lake Golf Club, Sunday, Sept. 5, 2021, in Atlanta.

Associated Press

By DOUG FERGUSON

AP Golf Writer

ATLANTA (AP) — Patrick Cantlay made a name for himself — not just a nickname — in a span of two weeks that will be remembered as much for his sheer grit as the \$15 million he earned from winning the FedEx Cup.

Four times at the BMW Championship, he stood over a putt from 6 feet or longer knowing that he would lose if he missed. Cantlay made them all to eventually win in a six-hole playoff over Bryson DeChambeau.

One week later, with the FedEx Cup on the line against the world's No. 1 player, Cantlay delivered three pressure shots in succession — a 6-foot sliding bogey putt on the 17th green to keep a one-shot lead, a 361-yard drive that split the 18th fairway and a 6-iron that was nothing short of perfection to set up a one-shot win over Jon Rahm in the Tour Championship.

The satisfaction came more from winning than what he won. That came from when he wasn't playing at all, and wondered if he would ever have a chance to celebrate a moment like this. "As tough as those tough times were," he said Sunday at East Lake, "they made me who I am."

Cantlay was the No. 1 amateur in the world, the low amateur in the 2011 U.S. Open, so good that he shot 60 at the Travelers

Championship between his freshman and sophomore years at UCLA. And it all changed during his rookie year on the PGA Tour. He described the pain he felt warming up for the second round at Colonial in 2013 as someone plunging a knife down his back; the consequences were dire. He didn't play for another year, and then only sparingly, because no matter what doctors tried, and no matter how much better he felt in daily life, it still hurt to play golf.

Cantlay recalled one spine doctor whose advice was jarring: Stop playing golf. "I had already been out 18 months or two years, and I said, 'How long?' He said, 'Maybe a year.' He was dead serious. And that really shocked me, and I was scared," Cantlay said. Until that point, he had few disappointments in life. Cantlay won't say he lived a charmed life because he worked hard for what he had.

But he agreed to take a year off, and while his back improved, another dose of devastation came when he least expected it. He was out to dinner with his best friend and caddie, Chris Roth, when Roth was killed in a hit-and-run accident while the two were crossing the street.

He had to come back from more than a lower spine injury.

"I think the biggest thing is it's given me great perspective," Cantlay said.

"Growing up, I felt like I got better and better in golf, and life got better and better. And then it got as bad as it could have been. I felt as low as it could have been for a little while. Coming out on the other side of that, I feel like I am a better person having gone through those dark days." It made him tough, yes, and grateful to be playing, which is not to suggest he is willing to settle for being able to play golf for a living. Cantlay returned after two years and three months away from the game at Pebble Beach in 2017, and he holed a 45-foot birdie putt on his final hole to make the cut on the number. Managing a limited schedule while returning from a severe back injury, along with ankle issues that surfaced briefly, he played only 12 times and still made it to the Tour Championship.

That would have surprised no one who saw a game that has no apparent weakness except for the lack of victories. Those came in bunches this year. The Tour Championship, where he started with a two-shot lead as the No. 1 seed in the FedEx Cup standings, was his fourth title of the year. No one else won more than twice.

Along the way, he picked up a moniker — "Patty Ice" — and more support than he has ever heard on the course. Cantlay is more old-school than self-promoter, and a \$40 million bonus pool is not going to get him to change.

Even so, the cheers were inspiring.

"I can tell after last week that it felt like more people were on my side, and that feels great," he said. "And so maybe the nickname has helped me out with that a little bit because it lets me be who I am. But I've always said that I'm going to let my golf clubs do the talking, and I'm going to put all my energy into playing the best golf I can and let everything else take care of itself." □



In this Feb. 5, 2021, file photo, Kaillie Humphries and Lolo Jones, of the United States, start during the two-women's bobsled race at the Bobsled and Skeleton World Championships in Altenberg, Germany.

Associated Press

World champions Humphries, Jones named to U.S. bobsled team

By TIM REYNOLDS

AP Sports Writer

Reigning world champion Kaillie Humphries was announced as part of this season's USA Bobsled national team on Monday, even with her status for this winter's Beijing Olympics remaining unclear. Humphries was a lock to make the team after winning gold medals in both the traditional two-person and the new women's monobob event at last season's world championships.

Lolo Jones, the Olympic hurdler-turned-bobsledder who pushed Humphries' two-person sled on the way to that world championship last winter, also was selected for the national team. The teams were revealed Monday morning in Lake Placid, New York.

Humphries will compete in World Cup races this season and be part of the U.S. contingent traveling to China next month for the first race of the season on the newly built track that will play host to the Olympics in February. But her Olympic status remains murky because she has yet to receive a U.S. passport and has asked the International Olympic Committee to grant her permission to race at the games — where she would be a gold-medal favorite in two events.

Joining Humphries as drivers on the women's team this season are Elana Meyers Taylor and Brittany Reinbolt. And joining Jones in the pool of women's push athletes are Aja Evans, Lauren Gibbs, Sylvia Hoffman, Lake Kwaza and Kaysha Love.

The men's team has drivers Hunter Church and Codie Bascue, and push athletes Hakeem Abdulsaboor, Kris Horn, Blaine McConnell, Jimmy Reed, Nic Taylor, Carlo Valdes, Charlie Volker and Josh Williamson.

The USA Skeleton national team was also announced Monday, led by Katie Uhlaender — who is seeking to compete in her fifth Olympics in what will be her final season — and fellow Olympic veteran John Daly.

Megan Henry and Kelly Curtis will join Uhlaender on the women's World Cup team. Daly will be joined by Austin Florian on the men's team for World Cup races to open the season.

The six skeleton athletes picked to open the season on the Intercontinental Cup tour, which could provide a path toward making the Olympic team, were Kendall Wesenberg, Savannah Graybill, Sara Roderick, Andrew Blaser, Dan Barefoot and Stephen Garbett. □